



GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

-----0-----

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

4611 Tutu Park Mall  
Suite 300  
St. Thomas, VI 00802  
(340) 774-3320

45 Mars Hill, Frederiksted  
St. Croix, VI 00840  
(340) 773-1082  
dpnr.vi.gov



**Office of the Commissioner**

CONTACT: Jamal Nielsen, Media Relations Coordinator  
[jamal.nielsen@dpnr.vi.gov](mailto:jamal.nielsen@dpnr.vi.gov)

Wednesday, August 9, 2023

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**PRE-MEETING INFORMATION ON HULL BAY RAMP RENOVATION**

Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources recognizes that there are many comments and concerns regarding the Hull Bay Ramp Renovation and would like to clarify many of the misconceptions being spread on social media.

The Hull Bay ramp renovation project was initiated in 2011. The first set of design plans were unveiled in 2013 after two rounds of public meetings. Due to funding factors, the full construction documents were not completed. In 2017, renewed funding allowed for a second round of public meetings and subsequent designs. Unfortunately, the Hull Bay ramp collapsed in February 2019 and funds were re-programmed to fix the ramp. "Now, we have a third opportunity to create a stronger, more durable boating ramp with associated trailer parking in Hull Bay," said Commissioner Oriol.

Since the architectural and engineering (A&E) plans were unveiled, the Department has received comments on the plans. Several of the most common concerns and comments are addressed below:

- 1. There will be continued use during the construction phase.** In a February 2022 town hall meeting organized by the Honorable Governor Bryan, users asked where they would launch from during the construction as the original plan had the ramp being removed and replaced in the same footprint. Staff noted the concern and worked with the A&E team to address the concern. DPNR prioritized the continued use of the ramp by the boating community, and despite the higher cost for the project, the current ramp will stay in place while the new ramp is under construction and will be removed afterwards
- 2. There is too much development.** Some of the comments have stated that there is "too much" being developed. We note that in the plans, the parking area to the north of the ramp are in a red-dashed box and labeled as "Add/Alternate." As we had the funding to do a complete set of designs, we requested that the A&E team organize parking so we could determine several spaces and see what it would

potentially cost. The area is listed as an “Add/Alternate” because it will not be included in this current development phase, but we wanted to have the details completed.

3. **The planned development is to facilitate the development of Inner Brass.** This statement is completely false, and there is no proof to substantiate such a claim. In fact, quite the opposite is taking place – the Department of Agriculture, has secured some \$5M+ through the USDA Forest Legacy Program to acquire 90.59 acres of the 127 acres (or 70%) on Inner Brass for preservation of green space, in what VIDA is calling the “Inner Brass Park.” That is the focus of the GVI with respect to the development of Inner Brass, not commercial development of the Cay.
4. **The planned development is to provide additional parking or expansion of the private development “The Shack” in Hull Bay.** Once again, this is another false statement with no substantiating proof. This project was initiated in 2011, prior to the existing owner of The Shack even owning property in Hull Bay. The scope of the project was extended to address parking for the vessel launch as parking specifically to address trailer use is a necessary part of planning a vessel launch. The parking area to the south of the ramp included in the project focuses on addressing what is consistently damaged by stormwater runoff and creates spaces for the parking of vehicles WITH TRAILERS after a vessel is launched. There are a few individual parking spaces reorganized, but the focus is on trailer parking. The private establishment has ample parking of its own.
5. **The ramp is significantly larger than the existing ramp.** The existing ramp is just short of 100’ in length and the proposed ramp is 120’ in length; both the existing ramps and proposed ramp are to be 12’ in width. The reason for the slight ramp extension is the user’s complaint that the existing ramp is too short and ends in about 2.5’ of water, and to get into a decent water depth, users must put their vehicles almost fully into the water. The new ramp will have a lower pitch and the extension will end in 4.5’ of water, making it easier to launch vessels, without having to place one’s vehicle into the water. The extension of the ramp was part of the discussions going back to 2011 and was included in the 2013 designs.

The ramp will be fortified with riprap on the sides to prevent scouring and protect it from significant wave action. Again, this was discussed in the 2011 public meetings and was included in the 2013 designs.

6. **A significant number of trees are being removed.** The plans call for a total of 13 trees to be removed, some of which are standing in the existing parking area and users must park around. The plans include leaving most shoreline Maho and Sea Grapes on the beach. A specific note in the drawing states that 10 of the trees removed for the project are to be replaced.
7. **Why are Permeable Pavers being used?** The existing parking area is subject to stormwater intrusion and potholes and scouring are common in the parking area.

DPNR sought to improve the parking area by addressing the drainage and making the parking area less susceptible to stormwater impacts. DPNR originally conceived the parking area to include an erosion mat backfilled with sand and gravel (like the parking area at Lindquist beach). Concern about the weight of trailers by the engineers resulted in an option that includes permeable pavers in addition to the erosion mat. If one of the proposed systems or another system is finally selected, it is important to note that a final option should result in water infiltrating the ground and not sitting on the surface. The intent is to a sturdy parking surface that will withstand stormwater impacts and not result in craters/potholes over time or sediment polluting the water.

The meeting will be held at The Shack at Hull Bay. This site was selected by DPNR only because previous comments at public meetings indicated having the meetings at Hull Bay were necessary to effectively engage the stakeholders that use the ramp, and it is the only location in that vicinity with the necessary public accommodations to hold a meeting of this size. The meeting will include presentations by DPNR and plan engineers and will include a public comment period at the end of the meeting. At the meeting, you will be asked to sign up at the beginning of the meeting, and state if you wish to provide a comment to the Department and engineers. After the presentations by the Department and the engineering firm, the public will be asked to provide their comments when called upon in the order in which they signed in. Comments may also be submitted in advance to [DFWelectronic@usiv.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:DFWelectronic@usiv.onmicrosoft.com).